

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 BNDE-00 PA-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10

IO-12 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00

USIA-12 NSC-10 SCI-06 OMB-01 RSR-01 /087 W
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P R 252130 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4106

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

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MEXICO FOR BNDD

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT SNAR CS

SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE INQUIRY INTO GOCR DEPT OF NARCOTICS
MENTIONS US

1. LA NACION ON MAY 22, 1973 CARRIED STORY CONCERNING
TESTIMONY OF A WITNESS BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
FOR SPECIAL AFFAIRS LOOKING INTO THE OPERATIONS OF THE
GOCR DEPT. OF NARCOTICS. THE WITNESS, NELSON TORRES TOVAR,
CLAIMED TO HAVE CREDENTIALS AS A " SPECIAL AGENT" FROM
VARIOUS AGENCIES INCLUDING THE " DEPARTMENT OF STATE' S
NARCOTICS SECTION IN COSTA RICA", AND MENTIONED NAMES
OF FORMER AND PRESENT EMBASSY NARCOTICS COORDINATORS,
BNDD AGENTS, AND ALLEGED CIA AGENT, LUIS VEGA.

2. TORRES, A VENEZUELAN NATIONAL, IS CURRENTLY UNDER A
GOCR DEPORTATION ORDER, AND IS BELIEVED TO BE ATTEMPTING
TO CARRY FAVOR WITH OPPOSITION DEPUTY EMILIO PIEDRAT

ENEZ IN ORDER TO AVOID DEPORTATION. PIEDRA, THOUGH
NOT A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION, INSTIGATED THE INQUIRY
AND HAS BEEN ITS PRINCIPAL PROMOTER.

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3. TORRES COLLABORATED WITH GOCR DEPT. OF NARCOTICS AND BNDD IN EARLY STAGES OF A COCAINE SMUGGLING CASE (SEPT 1972) INVOLVING ECUADOREAN NATIONAL, GALO CANESSA, WHO IS CURRENTLY FREE ON BOND IN COSTA RICA AWAITING TRIAL. FOR HIS PART IN OBTAINING INFORMATION, TORRES WAS PAID \$500 REWARD BY BNDD MEXICO, AND TO FACILITATE HIS TRAVEL TO MEXICO TO COLLECT REWARD, WAS GIVEN A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION BY FORMER EMBASSY NARCOTICS COORDINATOR. EMBASSY HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER LETTERS OR " CREDENTIALS" ISSUED BY U. S. AGENEIES. INFORMATION PROVIDED BY TORRES, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE CANESSA CASE WHICH HE APPARENTLY STUMBLED UPON, HAS BEEN OF LITTLE VALUE, AND IN SOME CASES WAS OBVIOUSLY FABRICATED.

4. AT AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST, EMBASSY NARCOTICS COORDINATOR SPOKE WITH DEPUTY EMILIO PIEDRA TO CLARIFY CIRCUMSTANCES OF U. S. COLLABORATION WITH GOCR DEPT OF NARCOTICS IN CASES INVOLVING INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS TRAFFIC. PIEDRA WAS GRATEFUL FOR OUR INTEREST IN CLARIFYING SITUATION, AND PROVIDED EMBASSY COPIES OF MINUTES OF COMMISSION SESSIONS IN WHICH TORRES TESTIFIED. COPIES WILL BE FORWARD TO DEPARTMENT AND TO BNDD MEXICO.

5. THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER COVERAGE IN THE PRESS ON THIS MATTER. IF ASKED, EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO COMMENT THAT USG DOES COLLABORATE WITH COSTA RICAN AUTHORITIES ON CASES INVOLVING INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKERS. BNDD AGENTS ALWAYS WORK WITH GOCR DEPARTMENT OF NARCOTICS FOR THIS PURPOSE AND DO NOT INTERVENE DIRECTLY IN INVESTIGATIONS. TORRES PLAYED LOWER LEVEL ROLE IN INITIAL STAGES OF CANESSA CASE, AND DID RECEIVE REWARD AND LETTER OF INTROCUPTION AS OUTLINED PARA 3 ABOVE. LUIS VEGA WAS AN ADVISOR TO GOCR IN POLICE SECURITY FIELD WHO DEPARTED COSTA RICA SOME TIME AGO.
VAKY

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